Protecting Workers from Heat Stress

Heat Illness
Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided.

There are precautions your employer should take to prevent heat-related illnesses. For example, they should periodically monitor workers for signs of heat stress. They should also provide cool drinks and shaded areas for workers.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness
- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Low liquid intake
- Heavy physical labor
- Waterproof clothing
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion
- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting
- May stop sweating

To Prevent Heat Illness, Your Employer Should
- Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.
- Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area. At least one pint of water per hour is needed.

What to Do When a Worker is Ill from the Heat
- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.

IF THE WORKER IS NOT ALERT or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.

For more information:
OSHA: Occupational Safety and Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
www.osha.gov  (800) 321-OSHA (6742)

OSHA: Quick Card
U.S. Department of Labor
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Rodents, Snakes and Insects

Insects, Spiders and Ticks
- To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET or Picaridin.
- Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and prevent infection.
- Avoid red ants; their bites are painful and cause blisters.

Snakes
- Watch for snakes on the move. If you find one, do not touch it.
- If bitten, note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.
- Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom. In the case of a dangerous snake, seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck out the venom. Apply first aid: lay the person down so that the bite is below the level of the heart, and cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

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